

probably, at this point, a bigger number of people who we think would be a percentage of people who would have really negative consequences—even death—from this disease, rather than all the people who had it and didn't know they had it.

We have learned in the past, through outbreaks of a flu strain that we didn't have a vaccine for, of Ebola, of Zika, that what we do to protect people in other countries winds up protecting people here. We have to be sure that we understand that a lot of our fate in this has been determined and will continue to be determined by what we do to first try to contain this virus and, secondly, to provide the money to be sure that, when we do have an outbreak, which has already begun in our country, it is an outbreak that is really held at the lowest possible level of people impacted and, if you are infected by this disease, that you have the ability to work from home, to do other things. The hospital is not always the place to go.

We are working with State and local health officials right now to see that that happens. The money that has been used, I think, has been used effectively. Clearly, we are trying to agree—between the House and the Senate and the administration—to exactly the right number. I would say that, at this point, the administration has been the most agreeable to whatever money we want to provide but, obviously, would like to have that money provided quickly.

I feel confident we are going to have the resources to deal with this. I feel confident that this will be a problem that will not impact more people than would usually be impacted by something like the flu. Again, we need to prepare for the very worst and hope for the very best, but our job right now is to prepare for the worst things that could happen and have the funding available so that we don't have to go through a couple of weeks again where an easy determination should have been reached.

One thing we could have done is to have given the administration exactly the amount of money they asked for—we could have decided to spend it differently—2 weeks ago and then get into a discussion of what we need next. That is not the course we decided to go down.

We are trying to come up with an amount of money, it appears, that would get us through this entire incident with this virus, but it is time to get that done. Hopefully, we will see a bill filed later today and the House able to vote on that bill before they leave this week. Once that number is done, I think it will be seen as almost certain that the Senate will be able to deal with that bill and approve that number.

We are going to move forward. I think, again, we are going to move forward in a way that minimizes, as much as possible, the impact that this has on families and on individuals.

Mr. President, I look forward to you and I both having a chance to learn more about this even today and to learn more as we move forward. The big thing we need to learn now is the amount of money we need to have to spend and how we allocate that money for a vaccine and other things.

RECESS

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:28 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

ADVANCED GEOTHERMAL INNOVATION LEADERSHIP ACT OF 2019— Motion to Proceed—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the bill before us supports clean energy and emerging technologies, so this is the perfect opportunity to update an outdated aspect related to a legacy energy source.

Senator UDALL of New Mexico and I have an amendment that will close a loophole in Federal energy policy. I want my colleagues to know—and I think they do—of my long support for renewable and alternative sources of energy, and so I agree with the aims of the Murkowski-Manchin Energy bill.

The amendment Senator UDALL and I have introduced is the same as the bipartisan bill we introduced last week. The title of that bill is the Fair Return for Public Lands Act. This bill was introduced 100 years to the date of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920.

This amendment would increase the royalty rates on Federal lands from 12.5 percent to 18.75 percent. Everybody here knows that a royalty is what the oil company will pay to a mineral owner—in this case, the mineral owner is the American taxpayer—and that royalty is paid for the right to extract oil and natural gas from the lands of the United States. The legislation modernizes the public lands leasing system, and it does this for the first time since royalty rates were set in 1920.

The legislation increases both the share of royalties taxpayers receive from public lands leasing as well as the rental rates. The new rental rate we are offering in this amendment reflects the current fair market value, while the bill also establishes minimum bidding standards to lease public lands that will stay in line with inflation. This bill is a simple fix by making Federal leasing rates the same whether you are on land or offshore.

The royalty rate the bill offers is very comparable to what current leases are for oil-producing States on their State-owned land. We use the State of

Texas as an example. Texas charges a 25-percent royalty on its State lands, while States in the Rocky Mountain West charge royalties that are somewhere between 16²/₃ percent and 18³/₄ percent. The royalty rate on Federal public lands is more than one-third lower, at 12¹/₂ percent; hence our amendment—the same as our bill—updating this and bringing more parity between State rates and Federal rates and, of course, absolute parity with offshore drilling.

The current regulatory system allows companies to get a sweetheart deal on Federal public lands. Senator UDALL and I are asking our colleagues to fix this for the American people.

According to studies done by the Congressional Budget Office and the Government Accountability Office, modernizing public lands royalty rates for oil and gas could increase Federal revenues by as much as \$200 million over the next decade and do it with little to no impact on production.

It is time—hence our amendment—for my colleagues in Congress to end this oil company loophole and bring oil leasing into the 21st century.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today as a Senator as well as a physician. I want to do this to reassure the American people that we are doing everything possible to combat and contain the coronavirus. According to Johns Hopkins University, a well-known medical institution, we here in the United States are the most prepared Nation on the face of the Earth to protect ourselves in terms of preparation for an infectious disease like the coronavirus.

Nevertheless, this virus is a global concern and is a problem with pandemic potential. We know the outbreak started in China. It goes without saying that we are deeply saddened by the loss of life there, as well as here and around the world. We are concerned about those currently suffering from the virus. Our focus continues to be on protecting the health and the well-being and the safety of the American people. That is where we need to focus.

Notably, President Trump's early travel restrictions on China have actually helped slow the spread of the virus. He has since expanded these restrictions. The President, I believe, has acted swiftly, boldly, and decisively to contain the virus and to keep Americans safe. Still, this country is not a hermetically sealed bubble. It will never be—can't be. We are likely to see more cases here in the days and weeks ahead.